

head coach Caryl Schawe, while making its fifth State appearance in the last 7 years. And the second from the Hilltop Press are the girls on that particular team, and the caption reads: "The 2005 State Division II Volleyball Champions From Roger Bacon. Front row from left, Courtney Hausfeld, Vicki Auer, Carrie Prickel, assistant coach Andrea Schwartz, middle row manager Annie Kathman, Julie Brunsman, Kelsey Rose, Katie Veatch, Jamie Frey; top row assistant coach Jodi Kirch, Ali Wilson, Katie Westerfeld, Heather Hausfeld, Lauren Newron, and head coach Caryl Schawe."

Now, the women were not the only ones representing the city of Cincinnati with State championship trophies in the month of November. The boys' cross-country team at my alma mater, La Salle High School, literally went the distance to capture Ohio Division I cross-country team title at the State meet in Columbus. Having been voted the unanimous number one ranking in the final Associated Press coaches' poll, the Big Red Express did not disappoint. The team bested its second place performance from last year by posting the lowest overall score in the State boys' Division I meet since 2001, this time defeating runner-up North Canton by an incredible 66-point margin.

The victory was a first for La Salle's cross-country team, which had four second place State finishes since 2000, and is a testament to the continued hard work and dedication of head coach Frank Russo who garnered his first State title in 23 years of coaching. That is the third one from the Hilltop Press over here. The caption in that one read: "The La Salle Boys Cross-Country Team Placed First in the State Meet on Saturday. Front row from left are Dominic Lanzillotta, Tim Mink, Kyle Hoffman, and Jeff Ehler. Back from left are assistant coach Dean Fulmer, David Mette, Mitchell Heusmann, Corey Spriggs, Jake Nusekabel, Kyle Lang, Greg Bader, Ricky Lutt, Andrew St. George, head coach Frank Russo, and assistant coach Joe Muenchen."

Continuing the longstanding tradition of excellence, each of these three schools has come to symbolize these student athletes have learned invaluable lessons of commitment, teamwork, and perseverance that will serve each of them well as they prepare for their future.

Cincinnati has much to be proud of, thanks to these outstanding young men and women; and it is an honor for me to congratulate them on the floor of the House of Representatives. Congratulations Seton; congratulations Roger Bacon; and congratulations to my alma mater, La Salle.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GOHMERT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the leadership for allowing me to spend some time this evening talking about an issue that is of utmost importance to the American people. I am constantly amazed at news reports at home, when I go home and I watch television news and I read the newspaper and see what is being portrayed as usual for the American public.

If you just followed those stories, you would not believe that there was anything that was good or positive going on in our Nation. You would not believe that the economy, for example, was doing very, very well. So one of the things that I try to do, and I know others try to do as well, is to try to assist and bring about some truth in reporting. So tonight what we would like to do is spend a little time talking about the economy, for the American people know better than what they see on the nightly news and what they read in the newspapers.

In fact, so many of the folks that I talk to at home are really tired of the gloom and doom that gets reported on the news and frankly gets stated over and over and over here in Congress by some Members. They are tired of Congressmen and -women who put politics and partisanship over good policy, and I hear so often back home that folks say, Why can't you just get something done on behalf of the American people?

Well, a lot of good things are getting done, and we are going to spend a little time tonight talking about our economy and some things that Congress is doing and has done to assist the American people, to help American families, to help American children, to help American communities. It is important that we do that, because there is good news to tell. So what we would like to do is spend a little time tonight and review so many of the positive things that have been done to create really an economy that is on the move. I would like to begin by just sharing a number of different charts that demonstrate clearly that the economy is growing.

This is a chart here that I think really crystallizes so many of the good sto-

ries that we have to tell. This chart begins in the first quarter of 2001; and along this axis here is the annual change in GDP, or gross domestic product, that is, how well is the economy doing. As you see for the first number of quarters of 2001 and 2002, it is kind of going along, kind of bumping up and down, and then there is a remarkable change that occurs in early 2003. From then on, from the second quarter of 2003 on, what we see is a gross domestic product growth in every quarter, 10 quarters in a row of a growth of greater than 3 percent and oftentimes greater than 4 percent. In fact, the most recent quarter grew at a rate of 4.3 percent.

The individual who wants to know how to continue that kind of growth and who is excited about policies that encourage growth would say, Well, what happened? What happened at that point to bring that kind of growth about? As most people know, what happened was that the tax cuts, the tax relief that Congress enacted on behalf of the hard-working American taxpayers went into effect, and that has resulted in this incredible, incredible growth in the economy that continues, that continues unabated. And what Congress has an opportunity to do this week is to continue and extend that tax relief, hopefully, to be able to continue the lines that we have seen grow in the economy.

This is another chart that demonstrates the kind of response that the American economy has to that kind of activity. This talks about the creation of new jobs in our country. In fact, since the spring of 2003, there have been 4.46 million new jobs that have come about, and this chart shows the percent increase each month from early 2002 through the current time. You see, again, there is that remarkable change that occurs in the early part and mid-part of 2003, where the growth in the number of jobs is remarkable. Again, the inquiring individual would want to know, Well, what changed there? What made it so that we did not have negative growth in jobs, we had positive growth in jobs? As everybody well knows now, that change was the tax relief, the tax relief that Congress enacted that took place in early 2003.

Just to put those numbers all together, this chart, which is a little busy, shows two very clearly distinct lines. One is the green line down here that is the number of jobs that increase in our Nation each month; the red line is the level of unemployment. And as you see, at the beginning of 2003, the unemployment rate was taken up here somewhere around 6 percent and the number of jobs began to increase at this point when the tax relief package went into effect. We see that continued increase; and in fact right now the unemployment rate is down at 5 percent, which is lower than the average for the decades of the 1970s and the 1980s and the 1990s.